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THE COLLEGIATE SYSTEM

OF THE

UNITED STATES.

J. R. Loomis



Am. Soc.

AN

INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

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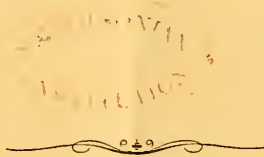
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BY

Rev J. R. LOOMIS, LL. D.,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY AT LEWISBURG.



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LEWISBURG, *December 10th*, 1859.

DR. LOOMIS,

Dear Sir:

The undersigned, believing that the publication of your Inaugural Address on the "Collegiate System of the United States," delivered in Commencement Hall, July 27th, 1859, would promote the interests of Education and of this University, respectfully request the same for publication.

THOMAS WATTSON,
J. P. CROZER,
J. WHEATON SMITH,
A. K. BELL,
T. F. CURTIS,
CHARLES S. JAMES,
H. J. MULFORD,
GEORGE R. BLISS.



LEWISBURG, *December 12th*, 1859.

Gentlemen:

In accordance with your request, I submit the Address to your disposal.

J. R. LOOMIS.

To

THOMAS WATTSON, ESQ.,
J. P. CROZER, ESQ.,
REV. J. WHEATON SMITH,
REV. A. K. BELL,
PROF. T. F. CURTIS,
PROF. C. S. JAMES,
H. J. MULFORD, ESQ.,
PROF. G. R. BLISS.

ADDRESS.

THE present occasion seems not an inappropriate one for considering, in some of its aspects, the Collegiate System of the United States.

It originated not in educational theories, nor in great schemes for the future, but in a present and urgent necessity. The early colonists of this continent were men of sufficient cultivation and discernment to see almost at once that the education of their young people must be provided for, and provided for among themselves. If there was an early and somewhat exclusive regard to the necessities of clerical culture, the motives to early emigration and the character of the first colonists will sufficiently account for it, and still leave the full impression that the first collegiate establishments were intended to meet precisely the educational wants of the time.

As new colonies were founded, settlements extended, and population increased, while facilities for travelling and communication were imperfect, new institutions came into existence in almost all respects similar to those first established.

And thus the multiplication of collegiate establishments became, at an early day, a marked feature in our social system.

I shall not notice now the characteristics of these establishments, but simply observe that there have not been wanting innovators, who have attacked them as antiquated, as useless, as pernicious and immoral, and who have proposed to re-model them, by introducing in turn into them almost every conceivable new element, and by casting out almost all that they contained. They have, however, remained essentially the same, modified without revolution by the timely introduction of whatever experience and the progress of knowledge has indicated as desirable. But all of the essential innovations have flourished only their short day and disappeared.

Whatever has stood the test of long experience and severe ordeal we would not willingly relinquish.

Every true scholar desires to see American culture attain a higher level than it now occupies. This desire has found expression in efforts to establish Institutions of a higher grade than colleges, or to increase largely the amount of preparatory requisition, or to add one year or more to the term of collegiate pupilage.

We sympathize most heartily in this high and noble desire, and cannot doubt that the time will come and is rapidly approaching, when the demand for enlarged facilities in mental and æsthetic culture will justify some well digested plan to furnish them. But while this may be desirable, and

while the educators should be quick to see such indications, earnest to encourage them, and foremost in measures to meet all such demands, it is yet important that no such projects should be entered upon to become ignominious failures. If educators are to lead, they are also to be led. If they should project the scheme for such higher culture, and in a limited sense create the demand for it, they should also be restrained from projecting such scheme until the public mind is so far impressed with its importance, that when it is fairly entered upon, this impression in the public mind shall ripen somewhat rapidly into a uniform and permanent appreciation and patronage.

Whenever such demand shall exist, it will be because there are many who, having enjoyed the opportunities for liberal culture which our collegiate system furnishes, desire enlarged opportunities, and are willing to forego the emoluments and the urgent solicitations of professional preferment, to a later period in life.

The collegiate system, therefore, as now established in the United States, including substantially its present course of studies and uncentralized character, is not likely soon to give place to fewer Institutions, more centrally situated, more abundantly endowed, and furnishing and requiring a fuller range of academic training. We propose to consider briefly, then, the adaptation of our collegiate system, as now organized, to the condition of the American people.

The peculiarities of our people, therefore, first require a passing notice.

If we have a career before us of high importance, it is because there is something in our character as a people worthy of becoming the inheritance of humanity, and capable of self-sustentation and diffusion in the world. Wherever the Mohamedans conquered, they reorganized society. They had a force of character which led and controlled mind. The Scandinavian hordes overran Europe, but they gave it a new life. Spain, on the contrary, conquered America, but their conquests were failures. The Spanish-American States are now more Indian than Spanish. We believe that the American character has force enough to extend itself, and that it has, with suitable culture, excellencies enough to make such extension desirable.

In what does its peculiarity, regarded as a force and an excellence, consist? I should embody it all in one word—*Individuality*.

The origin of all of the best nations of the present day has necessarily precluded such individuality, and has introduced a relation of dependence. They are the result of conquest, involving first the relation of subaltern and superior, and secondly, the relation of victor and vanquished. Such is the condition of Europe, and it must continue to be, it would seem, perpetually, unless it may ultimately yield to the softening influences of time and the force of some great, successful and long continued experiment of equality and individuality.

From these fetters we are free. Observe how we have

been guarded from the development of any of these distinctions which involve dependence. The country was not taken possession of by conquest. It was by immigration. There were therefore no men who could claim the soil and parcel it out by feudal tenure; none upon whom special honors would naturally fall; none upon whom special responsibilities would rest; none whose right it was to command, and none who would feel any obligation to obey. The most obvious ground of social distinctions in the old world, and that which has had more influence and more abiding influence than any other, we were absolutely free from.

If, therefore, the original inhabitants had remained as an essential portion of the population, the broad distinction of classes could not have existed as in those countries where the original inhabitants are a conquered people. But, as if to remove all possibility of such distinctions here, the aborigines are likely to totally disappear. I know of no parallel to this in human history. To one small conquering people an utter extermination of their enemies was commanded, but it was never effected. The subjugated nation has always constituted the bulk of the population. Nor does there seem to be another place on the earth capable of colonization, where the race already there, will not in all future time constitute an integrant part of the colony or nation. The North American Indian is the one only peculiar race, which by an invariable law recedes, and recedes by diminution, before the face of the European pioneer. There

is neither deterioration of European character by absorption, nor the institution of a subordinate class by their continuance as a distinct people among us.

If we now pass from the circumstances which have promoted the formation of permanent social distinctions, to see what cast of character this one grade was likely to have, we shall expect to find men of earnest purpose. The colonists were not the rabble of the countries from which they came. The fact that they were not, was the reason of their coming. If they had been the unthinking mass, they could have remained in the land of their birth. The reason why they could not, was, that they had minds and consciences. Such colonists would bring with them their intelligence, their religion, their industrious habits; and they would most certainly leave behind whatever had prominently contributed to drive them from their former homes; that is, they would leave an hereditary aristocracy, a state church, a king, and the laws of entailment and primogeniture.

The colonies became an independent nation at a time, and in a way most promotive of a peculiar and national character. If the struggle had been earlier, it would have been unsuccessful. If it had been later, the colonists would have become too much assimilated to the ideas and government of the mother country. The early colonial condition of independence of each other, made it necessary, wherever a union should be formed, that all local preferences, and particularly for any religious establishment, should be waived.

The great extent of territory, diversities of character, somewhat of colonial antipathies, and strong sectional interests, made it necessary that the administrative department of the government should be energetic and powerful.

Thus it was that every loose appendage of character which could have been brought from other countries, was at the earliest possible period crushed out, and only character itself, the most self-reliant and active, remained.

It is also to be observed that, notwithstanding the large influx of foreigners of the most desperate character, yet another class, and one which constitutes no small part of this immigration, has consisted either of those whose enlightened views rendered them not at home, and perhaps hardly safe, in their own country, or it has consisted of those in less commanding positions, but of sufficient energy and forethought to seek opportunities for independence which, in their own country, they could never have hoped for. Thus it has happened in the providence of God that a considerable part of the immigrants from European nations have, without any human interposition, been very carefully culled out of the great body of human life there, and that the selection, while it has not taken those whose absence would be most regretted there, because it has taken those whose characters were least congenial with existing institutions there, has taken those who are most to be desired here, because they are those who most readily appreciate the character of our Institutions and most readily conform to them.

Thus I think it will be seen that there has been, in the circumstances which operated in bringing such men as founded these colonies, and such men as have constituted our more recent accessions, a peculiar guidance, not that of human council, but of a more extended forethought. The result has already been a great nation, possessing unexampled energy and self-reliance, a disposition to gather all that was good from the countries which they had left, but without any blind attachment to them. They were not a homogeneous people, merely transferred to a new locality, but they were so far heterogeneous as to make it necessary that the fabric of our social system should be reconstructed, with just enough preponderance of population from the English stock to make it certain that, without anything of servile imitation, the best parts of the freest European nation would be re-established here.

But this work of reconstruction, this process of digestive transformation, is yet hardly begun, though it is, I trust, to give to the world a new national type in its form and life, one body and one spirit, more symmetrical, more efficient, more conducive to human progress and human happiness, than has ever yet existed. How long this elemental condition is to continue, it may be unwise even to conjecture. The vast extent of our unoccupied territory, its boundless fertility, our great schemes of wealth, our vast network of railroads and canals, while they are sources of greatness and

union and power, have thus far tended rather to separate than to cement.

Geologists have sometimes occupied themselves in deducing, from the present structure and condition of the earth, the condition in which it existed in its early periods, while yet it was without form and void. And they tell us of the existence of those repulsive agencies which overcame the cohesive and gravitating forces, and maintained for ages an elastic, unsubstantial and chaotic state. And yet this chaotic state was the necessary antecedent to the wise and beneficent arrangement of the materials in the present constitution of our globe, and was an essential part of the eternal plan of that Spirit which then brooded over the dark abyss.

Such is to a great degree the condition of the people of this country. The cohesive forces are sufficient. We are plastic enough in our natures. But, thus far, there have been counteracting agencies. All is, no doubt, wisely planned. And when we do become a compacted whole, one people, as well as one nation, we shall see why we were kept so long in an elemental state. But the fact that claims our attention now is, that we are in this state of separateness. Every man stands alone.

A little reflection will convince any one that this individuality, or rather individualism, is a sort of key note to human action as it appears among us. Thus we find, in the business community, a pushing, independent energy, which,

if it does not interfere with the rights of others, yet pays very little attention to them, a self-reliant, self-supporting disregard of precedent, of ordinary methods, an inventiveness, the power of devising, as if we were in a world without antecedents.

And hence, that almost comical readiness of all men for all places, the confident assurance of our people that what any man ever has done they can themselves do, and are qualified to do it; or if they are not qualified, they can very soon become so.

A man may have been engaged in any laudable pursuit, and been fully successful in it,—but if a more lucrative, or more honorable, or less tasking pursuit presents itself, he can abandon former expenditure, or experience, or influence, without a struggle or a misgiving, to enter upon the pursuit of a higher promise.

This kind of broad-based, self-supporting egoism evidently induces the very general ignoring of all gradations in society. Certainly no man has any superiors, and it is but just to say that the idea of inferiority has but little prominence among us. Socially, we are equals to an extent elsewhere unknown. Politically, we are all sovereigns.

The past does not satisfy us. Precedents are abandoned even where precedents are the most authoritative. We tamper with legislation as if the antiquity of a law were a reason for its abrogation. We love to experiment. We

commit ourselves to untried schemes, because they are untried.

Our individuality is also seen in the absence of those ties by which classes are elsewhere united. We have no clan-ship. Even family ties are weak. The word cousin expresses, with us, a very distant relationship, and there are very few who can trace back their genealogy more than two or three generations. So completely does each individual concentrate his all in his present self.

It is very much the same in religious matters. To form a new religious sect is really a very easy matter. There are men always ready to raise a new standard, and there are always enough to range themselves by the side of it. And yet there is more of diversity of opinion in each sect among us than anywhere else.

For the same reason no extensive religious organization can feel any confidence of perpetuity. Comparatively slight disagreements result in dissolution. The organizations for religious benevolence which were once national, have all become divided, and many of them redivided and subdivided. With many recognized grounds of union, the larger and even the local and neighborhood associations easily fall asunder.

The voluntary support of the institutions of religion among us is equally characteristic of us, and of this separate and individual force by which our people are governed. They contribute more than any other people, but they will

not do it by force of law, nor by any other force than their individual sense of ability and obligation.

This want of coherence no doubt exists, but it does not prove, nor do we believe that it results from, the elements of character to which it has been attributed. It has been said that we are anti-social, that we are opinionative, that we are ill-natured, hard to please, scarcely fitted for anything but to find fault.

It is not surprising that, from the facts, such inferences have been drawn, and yet we think that all of the facts may be regarded more truthfully as the outgoing of independent thought, and the absence of such extended and liberal culture as would give somewhat of affinity to original thinking and untrammelled expression of thought. It results, in a word, from the individuality of American character, and the absence of a homogeneous culture.

Reviewing for a moment what has now been said: In the first place, we sprang from an immigration of thinking and educated men. Secondly, no systems were brought to this country, as if we were a transplanted nation, and everything tended to prevent the formation of permanent social distinction, and to the introduction of whatever had been found objectionable in other countries. Thirdly, all of the developments in this country have tended to establish a feeling of independence of government and independence of each other, and to awaken a high degree of activity in every mind.

The great peculiarity with us then is, not our improvement, but the favorable conditions for our becoming improved, beyond what is elsewhere enjoyed. We have almost as many persons capable of culture, and ready to receive it, and free from obstacles to its being imparted and being used, as there are persons of a suitable age for such culture in the length and breadth of our land.

To this point we have arrived; and it is now our object to exhibit the Collegiate System of this country as adapted to reach, to a very considerable extent, the masses of the country in this respect, and to become the means of that homogeneousness of development which they require.

The influences which are to produce this result, if it ever is produced, must be infinitely varied. No great social change can be the result of a single cause. What we claim for the Collegiate System is, that it is a power among us, capable of reaching, and to a great extent moulding this great mass of plastic life of which we have spoken. Our grounds for entertaining these hopes of the system are, that it furnishes,

I. A culture that reaches the general character, and,

II. Instruction that embraces the elements of human knowledge, and,

III. That this culture and instruction may reach more or less directly the entire people.

I. *We speak then in the first place of its culture.*

It is not beyond our scope to refer in a word to those

less recognized elements of a common culture which the college furnishes; the closeness of association; the ceaseless attrition of active and contiguous minds; the generous rivalries; the genuine friendship combined with the strong antagonism of interest; the thorough democracy of the campus and the debating hall; the merciless kindness of some elbow censor; sometimes the rough outgush of boisterous passion; the never-ceasing discussion; the criticism; the pun; the fun; the total of student-life in college.

But we must pass these incidental matters, for we have only time to speak of that which has been deliberately purposed. It is one of the most prevalent ideas, and yet one of the most erroneous, that our collegiate system ought to, and does, aim mainly to communicate knowledge. Our aim is rather to educate than to teach. The terms by which we express the appropriate work of literary Institutions, are sufficiently definite. If we call it education, then it is the drawing out of the mind, giving it direction, activity, scope. If we call it training, then it is subjecting it to orderly and determinate action, as a vine is trained to a chosen direction by the gardener; or as a military company is trained to exactitude of evolution. If we call it discipline, then it is that process by which one becomes a disciple; that is, the process by which he comes to have such conformity of mind to that of a teacher as to be an exponent of the teacher's modes and views. If we call it culture, then we mean such working over and preparation of the mind for its future duties that

it is fitly compared to those labors by which uncultivated land is brought into a condition of greatest productiveness. And these terms express correctly the great end which the collegiate system proposes to accomplish. We do not underrate the value of the knowledge which it communicates. But if we must sacrifice one in order to retain the other, we would hold fast to the culture and trust to subsequent opportunities for obtaining knowledge.

It is appropriate to remark in this place that such culture is specially fitted for our condition. There is less with us than elsewhere to force the mind into particular channels. Other people have much to give shape, uniform shape, to character before the process of intentional culture commences. We have none of these things, certainly, none so obvious, and well defined, that the young mind at once sees and acts upon them, none that are not often and rudely disregarded.

Other countries have an established religion. And this, with all its evils, gives somewhat of uniformity to early development and mental character. With us, not only all forms of religion, but religion itself, has influence only for its intrinsic value. We regard it only as it is a matter of judgment or experience. Elsewhere it is an honored thing. It commands respect for its antiquity, for its imposing forms, for its necessity to position and preferment.

Other nations all have a venerated history. Every spot has its legend. Every family has its genealogy. Every

prominent point has its abbey in ruins, or its castle, renowned in former days, or its cathedral, or perhaps its oak that once preserved a monarch's life. The memories of other days make these places sacred, and these places together make the country. We have no history of this revered character. We have the elements of it, which will constitute such a history one or two centuries later. They inspire but little reverence now. We have a Plymouth Rock, and a Roger Williams Rock, but they are almost forgotten. We have the homes of the historic muse and of genius in fiction and in song, but they have not yet become the Abbotsford or Avon of other lands. Possibly we have some barefooted mountain maids, but no one has yet been immortalized as our "Lady of the Lake." We have our battle-fields, the theatres of patriotism and valor which have never been surpassed, but they are only an inheritance to be venerated by a coming age. We have the shrine of the worthiest man of historic time, but the sensitive American citizen blushes to remember it. Pass it unnamed. It will be cherished by-and-by. We have had statesmen whose names will go down to future ages as hallowed names. But they are passing through a fiery ordeal now, and the names of Adams and Jefferson and others of equal worth of a later date, are about as likely to be treated with disrespect as honor.

We, therefore, of all people, ^{must} need in our educational system, something to take hold of the mind and give it shape. And this pliant state, this unformed condition of

mind, furnishes ground to expect that the culture furnished will develop in some healthful degree a uniformity of mental character.

Consider more minutely in what this culture consists.

Young men come into college with minds highly active, though but little subject to control. College life gives that control. The careful adjustment of studies to hours will admit of no easy indolence or merely of activity as inclination prompts, but everything must be done at its time. Each duty must be performed *then*, or there will speedily result confusion and discouragement and degradation. In these habits of promptness important interests are involved, which will not allow the duties of any hour to be put off to that portion of duration which none of our calendars have found a place for, a convenient time.

This promptness is not subjection to a system of arbitrary rules. It is mental effort, tasking the powers. The mind cannot endure inactivity, but it will be satisfied with mere occupation without exertion; though it is *exertion* alone that will convert students into men. This is a prominent aim of our system of culture. The studies are such that while they require the exercise of memory, they require the exercise of thought, analysis, comparison, invention, combination, patience, will.

It is at this point that the sifting process takes place in college classes. For a time all rejoice in a college course, and suspect no difficulties. Presently there occur points to

be worked out by *patient continuance* in effort. All could apply themselves vigorously enough for a few times, and thus bid fair to be successful. But at length a part of them tire of that *continuance*. Their relish for the exercise is gone. Its novelty is gone. The first impulse has died away, and with it all the early promise of success. A term or two more, and that portion of a class is found to diminish in numbers. Various reasons induce them to change their plans, and but few of them are likely to rally their powers and take their places again as competitors for literary distinction.

The other portion of the class are equally annoyed with the steady *work*, where they had looked for play. They do, nevertheless, put their minds to the task. The work of each hour they do, though it be irksome. If their feelings recoil from it, they summon *will* enough to-day, to accomplish the work of to-day. The open air, or some interesting book or a leisure companion solicits their attention, but they have power of purpose just enough to seat themselves at their tables, to waive the solicitation from them, to bid their unwilling minds apply themselves to their allotted duties, and to find the necessary occupation of mind *alone*, instead of depending for it, on extraneous objects or social companions.

This is discipline. That which was at first irksome ceases to be so. The other powers of the mind learn subjection and become the efficient instruments of a vigorous will. A man, thus disciplined, is no longer subject to the tyranny of

caprice. He has self-command. He is the energetic worker in the carrying out of high purposes.

We do not claim that the college alone furnishes this discipline. It may come through similar struggles in the counting-room, or the workshop, or from the friction of rough contact with the world. But the college furnishes the means of this discipline more abundantly, adjusts them with greater care to the ability which has already been acquired, increases the complexity of difficulty as ability to grapple with it increases, and graduates the assistance furnished to individual necessities. Development in college is, therefore, more sure and more rapid than it can be elsewhere.

It is also more likely to be the development of the whole man, of all his powers, than it can be when acquired in the pursuits of active life. The college course has been carefully arranged with reference to such development. It encourages habits of observation and discrimination. It compels the student to reason, and to think consecutively. It turns the mind to the scrutiny of its own operations, and teaches it to rely on its own powers, and its judgments, whether logical, moral or æsthetic. And thus it reaches our whole intellectual, sensitive, moral and religious nature.

To effect such results, the student is guided along the paths of the high mental effort of all ages. He has logic and the exact sciences which were so far perfected in former times that but little has been left for modern skill and

thought to accomplish; he has the history of man as a social being, and as an individual; he has the highest conceptions of the beautiful, in art and thought, which the mind has ever attained; and such conceptions of the Divine as unaided human nature can attain. Then he threads the labyrinths through which it has pleased God to lead man in reaching his present knowledge of his own mental constitution. Then he passes to the more immediately practical forms of mental activity of later times in physical science and the methods of material growth and greatness.

It is a credit to our Collegiate System that it has so carefully excluded all professional culture. It aims only at that culture which every man should receive, that which precedes all that is professional, that which the truly professional culture must presuppose, and upon which all professional schools will insist as rapidly as the demands of society upon their pupils will allow them. It is well that our colleges have excluded professional culture, because the tendency is almost irrepressible in young men to hasten forward from their preliminary studies, to dip into that upon which they are to devote their energies in subsequent life. The danger is that broad foundations will not be laid. This danger is guarded against, as far as possible, by transferring to the professional school all that is strictly professional, and aiming only at that which is essentially prerequisite to high professional effort; and which is also appropriate and valuable for all men, not those alone who are in professional life,

but for men of literature or of investigation, men of leisure or of business.

Thus it is that the college is the bond of connexion between all professions and pursuits. It is the common ground of all cultivated men. Professional culture has its claims and power. Sameness of pursuit creates the feeling of brotherhood, and to a certain extent separates men into classes. But the evils of this segregation are obviated by another, earlier, more fundamental culture, which is common to all, and which has its principal centre and source in college life. It is here that culture ordinarily commences. There has been mental effort in the primary and preparatory school. The power to acquire has been improved, and considerable acquirement actually made. But the power to think and to express thought is but feebly developed. Acquaintance with one's self, with the nature of mind, the power of controlling mind, the exercise of judgment, the weighing of arguments, the balancing of opinions, the full waking up to what one is, and what one may be, all these are ordinarily first experienced in college. The æsthetic principles also lie nearly dormant till some progress is made in college. The opening of the mind to the appreciation of elegance or richness of thought, or grandeur of conception, or beauty of expression, does not reach anything like completeness till a large proportion of the college life is passed, but it is not deferred through the whole course. Sooner or later these emotions are awakened in the student. This is the passage

to the manhood of ^{man}man. If there are then no scintillations of genius, there never will be. If there is no capacity for thought then, there never will be. If then there are no high purposes, look not for them afterwards. If there is then no genialness of temper, or nobleness of character, nothing of the generous, the chivalrous, we need scarcely expect them in later life. But in a large majority of cases these manly virtues and appreciative powers do take their principal development in college, and they are then the fair index of the man in all his after years. This culture is never laid aside. It is the indelible impress which professional studies and pursuits, the rough experience of the world, and the softer influences of love, and home, and family, will never obliterate.

Such is the common ground upon which you meet to-day. For the time, your professions are forgotten. You come together, not as separate fraternities, not as the members of any one profession, nor as professional men at all, but as scholars; not specially as the alumni of this college, but as men of culture wherever obtained, as men who have common sympathies because you have received like mental discipline. This sameness of discipline comes from the common character of our widely extended educational system. You are not drawn together by a common nature, but by a common elaboration of that nature, an elaboration due mainly to the literary institutions of our land. These institutions are the common unit of the nation; the source

of the common power and the common feeling; the means of uniting into one fraternity the clear thought, the true science, the pure literature, the genuine humanity, the culture, the life in fine, of a common country.

II. Nor is this influence to be ascribed wholly to the culture, but partly also to the *instruction*, which the college furnishes. Its value and the influence which it has, is due very much to its breadth, to the wide range of knowledge to which it extends. I have no disposition to propose any classification of knowledge farther than to show the comprehensiveness of the collegiate system of instruction. It includes

(I.) Those sciences which depend on axiomatic truths, that is, the pure mathematics.

(II.) Those sciences which depend primarily on the observation of phenomena.

These latter sciences have reference either to the Creator or to that which he has created, that is, to natural religion or to natural science.

Natural science, that is the science of the created universe, includes—(1.) The science of mind, its nature, powers and duties. This would embrace intellectual and moral science and logic; and we should not deviate much from a just arrangement to include under this head the history of the race, the sciences of government and of wealth, and the study of language.

Natural science includes—(2.) The science of the mate-

rial world. This material world in its *organic* forms possesses vitality alone, or vitality and sensation, and gives rise to the sciences of vegetable life and of animal life. The *inorganic* world, regarded as elementary particles, is chemistry; as masses, it is geology; as masses possessing certain powers, it is natural philosophy; as masses composing distinct bodies in space, it is Astronomy.

(III.) There is a third, and the only other conceivable source of knowledge, which is revelation, and the proofs of it are a part of general science.

Such is, in outline, the college course. What is there for us to know except it be of that which exists by necessity, or of that which exists by creation, or of that which we could not of ourselves know, but which has been taught us by some being superior to us?

It is too true that in college we only enter the vestibule of the great structure of even present and human knowledge. And this accumulation of knowledge is constantly augmenting. It may therefore at first be thought that the instruction of the college is every year embracing a less proportion of the total amount. But this we are by no means disposed to allow. Knowledge becomes simplified as it becomes extended. "The classifications both of things and facts with which the infant faculties of each successive race are conversant, are more just and more comprehensive than those of their predecessors; which, in one age were confined to the studious and enlightened few, becoming in

the next, the established creed of the learned, and in the third, forming part of the elementary principles of education. Indeed among those who enjoy the advantages of early instruction, some of the most remote and wonderful conclusions of the human intellect are, even in infancy, as completely familiarized to the mind as the most obvious phenomena which the material world exhibits to their senses."

"Observe how, at each epoch, genius outstrips the present age, and how it is overtaken by mediocrity in the next, and we shall perceive that nature has furnished us with the means of abridging and facilitating our intellectual labor, and that there is no reason for apprehending that such simplifications can ever have an end. We shall perceive that at the moment when a number of particular solutions and of insulated facts begin to distract the attention and to overcharge the memory, the former gradually lose themselves in one general method, and the latter unite in one general law, and that these generalizations continually succeeding one to another, have no other limit than that infinity which the human faculties are unable to comprehend."

"If these remarks be just, they open an unbounded prospect of intellectual improvement to future ages; as they point out a provision made by nature to facilitate and abridge, more and more, the process of study, in proportion as the truths to be acquired increase in number."*

* Steward's Intellectual Powers.

Thus it may be doubted whether the boundaries and amount of knowledge have extended more rapidly than the facilities for acquiring knowledge. A thorough education, embracing a condensed, elementary, but clear idea of all of the leading departments of human attainment, is probably as fully within the reach of assiduous effort on the part of youth now, notwithstanding the astonishing progress in modern times, as such an education was in the earliest cultivated nations.

Such is the kind of education, regarded as a system of instruction, which the college aims to furnish. Its extension is desirable, and so is perfection in many other things, though it may not be at once practicable. A collegiate system, to be the most useful, must be only so far in advance of the general public opinion as to lead it, and not so far in advance as to be out of sight. All colleges have to contend with the urgency which young men feel to be engaged in active life; and the demand for their services is such that they cannot ordinarily be retained in a course of elementary studies longer than our present course contemplates. But restricted as it is, its compass is such as to give to the student, at his graduation, a completeness of knowledge which leaves fewer things to be supplied than any other course that occupies the same time, and which has been uniformly regarded as the best attainable preparation for subsequent literary eminence or professional distinction.

III. If such are the results of the collegiate system, I need

scarcely consider the third point which I proposed, its capability of reaching, so far, the great body of our population, as that its culture and instruction shall work out this unity and homogeneous development of the general mind.

One of the encouragements to expect the general diffusion of this culture and instruction among the people, at least so far as to have a preponderating influence, is found in the low price of collegiate education among us. Our colleges are all to a great extent eleemosynary institutions. The price of collegiate instruction is not more than half of the actual cost. The remaining half is paid either by continuous contributions; or, more generally, by large investments in the way of buildings, apparatus and library, or by the interest of invested cash funds.

Such has been the appreciation of the importance of our higher educational system, that men have been found in all parts of our country who are ready to contribute largely towards these investments. And I know of no form in which beneficence has been more satisfactorily put forth. The people of this State have not been remiss in this duty, or at least they have done a noble work. I trust that I shall be excused for some expression of exultation at what has, in this respect, been accomplished *here*. You have carried on to completion this noble edifice. You have not moved hastily, but as men of financial skill and financial honor; and having completed the several structures required by this University, you are as a corporate body this day

beyond embarrassment. You have also funds safely invested which, though insufficient to constitute an ultimate reliance, are yet, considering the shortness of your corporate existence, an instance of almost unexampled success.

I know that these few years have not been without their periods of solicitude and trial and discouragement. I know somewhat of the heavy responsibilities which some of you have assumed, of the time which you have given to this enterprise, of the largeness of your contributions when much, that is now realized, existed only in expectation. Those were days of beginnings. Your work is so far accomplished that such demands and struggles cannot again occur.

Gentlemen of the Board of Trustees, permit me thus publicly to congratulate you upon your success.

Permit me also to be your organ in extending congratulations to that portion of this community and a wider public who have aided, and who therefore participate, in this success.

This is a digression, but it has served to show how it is, that education is offered at half its actual cost. These large contributions of liberal and far-seeing men are really a tariff in favor of education. They keep down the price below cost in order to induce those who would otherwise be debarred from education, to make the efforts and sacrifices necessary to attain it. Very few are therefore shut out from these advantages if they earnestly desire them. And such a proportion of young men do desire them and secure them

as to diffuse widely through the community, knowledge, culture, a spirit of inquiry, and particularly, an interest in regard to education which could never be secured except through the influence, direct, or indirect of the college.

Another encouragement to expect the result referred to, is found in the number of American colleges. They are so numerous as to have become characteristic of the United States. It has been looked upon as one of our reproaches that we cannot centralize, that we can be interested only in that which is near us, and hence that we have not and are not likely to have a small number of those great literary institutions, by which the more advanced European countries are distinguished. We are willing to admit the statement as a truth, and do not regret it. These large gatherings of students have not been found promotive of individual effort and sound scholarship. The high purposes to be gained will be better subserved by institutions more numerous, though less thronged with members, and of a more local character.

The local character of our institutions is that which we specially prize. In the European Universities the students have corporate and political rights and immunities as students. The multiplicity and local character of our colleges has prevented any such separation of students from other citizens. It has identified our graduates with the people, and prevented them from losing their citizen character and acquiring an exclusive and repulsive clannishness.

The multiplication of colleges promotes college morality. If the vicious sometimes gain admission to them it is impossible for them so to congregate as to defy public opinion and strengthen bad purposes by numbers. It is greatly owing to this, that manliness instead of villany has come to be the prevailing student character.

Our colleges, by their local character, present precisely the stimulus to that kind of effort which is necessary to bring the largest possible proportion of our young men to receive their advantages. The college is not so far from them as to appear to their minds inaccessible. They enjoy the occasional society of other young men who have been entered as college students. They mingle in our occasional festivities, imbibe something of youthful literary aspiration, learn the conditions of admission, indulge, first, the half-formed wish to become students themselves, then the hope, then form the well-digested plan. By this time half of the difficulties have been overcome. The execution is easier than the full formation of the purpose.

But there is more of incitement thus furnished than comes from these incidental associations. A young man with some activity of mind, but with limited opportunities, compares himself with one who, a few years ago, was in no respect his superior in attainments, but who has since applied himself to study. He is shrewd enough to see that he is falling into the background, not perhaps in social position, but in intelligence, in clearness and compass of mind, in power

over other associates, in acquaintance with the sources of knowledge and rational enjoyment; and he has sagacity enough to divine the cause, and firmness of will enough to apply himself to retrieve his lost position. This would not be mere matter of emulation, but of sound judgment brought into exercise by the opportunity of comparison. It is this opportunity of comparison, furnished more or less directly to all of the young men in our country by the multiplication of colleges, that furnishes one of the strong incentives to young men to enter, themselves, upon literary pursuits.

There is another feature of our American colleges which has tended to connect them intimately with all the people. It is their denominational character. All denominations have their colleges. And I know not that any evils have resulted from this. Students of all diversities of religious views are found in all our colleges, and their relations are not such as to occasion them any inconvenience. And yet each denomination has special interest in its own colleges; and it is this interest that has brought out from the pursuits of simple labor a large number of young men, and put them into a course of literary training.

It has been objected to this multiplication of colleges that it is a heavy tax on the community, both in the number of men employed as teachers, and in the cost of buildings and apparatus. The business of instruction has not thus far claimed more of the numbers or the talent of the educated portion of the community than it should. The

larger institutions must multiply the number of teachers with nearly the same rapidity, compared with the increase of pupils, that would be necessary to accommodate the same increase of pupils by establishing new colleges. In most of the appropriate labor of instruction small classes alone can be well taught.

Nor is the increased expenditure in the erection of buildings to be taken into account. The cost of edifices is nearly in proportion to the numbers which it is proposed that they shall accommodate. The cost of library and apparatus is, however, as great for a small number as for a large one; and viewed in that light alone a considerable additional expenditure is incurred in the attempt to furnish equal facilities for education in local colleges.

But this additional expenditure is more than refunded by the additional value given to property by the proximity of a college. If any one will attempt an accurate estimate of the increase in the value of property in any community by the establishment of Literary Institutions, in it; he will easily convince himself that it is fully equal to the entire expenditure. And, indeed, large outlays of the kind have often been made by far-seeing men as simple investments.

Considered then simply as a pecuniary question, and without estimating any of its remote advantages, the heavy pecuniary outlay of establishing local colleges is not a tax upon the community. Regarded as a question of Political Economy, it is capital profitably invested.

But it was not so much our object to defend them as pecuniary expenditures, as to point out the advantages arising from their tendency to diffuse widely the influence of knowledge, and thus become permanently a bond of union among the people. It is through the influence of colleges that talent is sought out, that encouragement is given, that obstacles to education are removed, that prejudices are overcome, that high purposes are formed, and the needful stimulus applied to quicken resolution into action.

And thus it has come to pass that our men of influence are educated men. To a very considerable extent the men of leisure and of wealth are educated men. Education has become a high source of power; and this power is in a great measure one, and its influence is in one direction. There will always be diversities of opinion, and with us there will always be freedom in the expression of opinion. But the tendency will be to harmony when the culture is alike. Peculiarities of temperament or condition may sometimes warp the judgment of the men of largest culture. But as a general thing the really "crooked sticks" in society will be found to be those which have never been trimmed and straightened. The mulish, the always antagonistic, the impracticables in society, are generally the least informed. Such men may be found among the thinkers, but they do not originate the movements nor control the progress in society. The master minds are the educated minds. We by no means say that they have been educated in a college. But they

have been disciplined. They have become thinkers, and it is the power of thinking that makes the men, and gives them influence. And it is admitted by all that the college is the best school for this training. If some have reached the goal by other means, it is because they had superior force and penetration of character, and were capable of accomplishing more than most men are.

I will attempt no estimate of the influence of the men in the Professions, in the Legislative Halls, in the departments of Authorship and the periodical Press, in the chairs of Instruction, and those who are prosecuting investigations in science and the arts. But you will all feel that without them society would be dissolved. And yet they are all without one honorable exception men of education, and men whose education, whenever and wherever gotten, has the spirit and partakes largely of the character of that given in the college. We go farther, and say that these men have an education which is homogeneous with that of the college, which, though not always obtained in college halls, had its origin and promulgation thence.

Nor is the system of American Collegiate Instruction unfelt in the pride of American Institutions, our common schools. I will not now go into this question. But if men of collegiate training were not the authors of our school-books, the devisers and upholders of the school system in our Legislatures, and the favorers of it in all our towns and boroughs, you would see it degenerate, lose efficiency and

favor, and finally slough off from our social organization and be no more.

I will no longer claim your attention. It has I think been made evident that the culture of the college is needed as the means of properly guiding our youth, that its instruction embraces the most complete system of knowledge consistent with our present restless character, and that therefore both the culture and the instruction are adapted to our condition, to our present state of advancement. The college is, therefore, an important part of our social fabric. It is that which gives it unity. It is inwrought into all that has contributed to our progress and that constitutes our greatness. I do not claim for it more than is due to other parts of the fabric, but only that it is an indispensably important part. And as such, I may claim for it the kindly and generous sympathy of every patriot and friend of humanity in our land.

The power of our educational system has not reached its culmination. I anticipate the time when the love of knowledge, as it arises in the minds of our ardent youth, shall not fail of being gratified, when all who desire to be educated may become so, when ignorance shall be banished and prejudice against education shall cease. It is not too much to believe that the Author of mind, the Being who made it capable of improvement and gave it aspirations after knowledge, intended that in the course of human changes, the family of man, as a race, as a world, should come to possess

and improve the facilities for acquiring knowledge. There would thus cease to be an educated class, for all would be educated. If there are other distinctions, that of education will not exist. The Professions and Commerce and the Mechanic arts and Agriculture may continue, there may be distinctions of wealth, there may be distinctions of station, while the men of all pursuits and all stations shall be educated men, shall possess largeness of views, grasp of knowledge and power of thought, a genial culture, and an interest in all that is lovely and elevating and inspiring in literature, in nature and in art. Thus amid all diversities of interest and pursuit and mental endowment, there shall be no antagonism of views, all shall see eye to eye, and the brotherhood of humanity will be realized.

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